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SANTIAGO NARANJO
GOVERNOR OF SANTA CLARA PUEBLO
LUMMIS PHOTO, USED BY HIM AS ILLUSTRATION FOR
"THE FIRST AMERICAN."

SOME SANTA CRUZ ISLAND ARTIFACTS

BY FREDDIE CURTIS

A small but interesting collection of Indian artifacts from the central coastal portion of Santa Cruz Island was brought to the Southwest Museum recently for classification. The informant stated that they were discovered in association with a group of partially exposed burials lying close together. While many of the artifacts are typical of those described by Rogers (1921: 282-322), a number are unusual in one way or another. These were photographed and descriptions and measurements taken for the Museum's records.

The illustration, (Fig. 4) shows a large leaf-shaped blade, an ornament made of serpentine (upper right), an easily-worked stone, a hafted knife blade, (upper left) a hafted projectile point, (lower left) a polished bone container or ornament, (bottom) and the remains of a modified bone tool. (lower right).

The leaf-shaped blade is unusually large for one made of fused shale, which does not occur on the island; but the material from which the blade is made resembles that which is found in Grimes Canyon, Ventura County, California (Curtis 1959: 12). The workmanship is very fine with diagonal ripple-flaking on both faces and regular pressure retouching along the edges. The blade has a concave base which has been thinned by the removal of several shallow flakes. When discovered, the blade was broken into three pieces, covered with red ochre on both sides, and had a touch of asphaltum on the base, indicating that it was once hafted. Similar blades, made of a nearly black flint, are described by C. C. Abbott (Yarrow 1879: Plate 2) from La Patera, in the Santa Barbara area, Santa Barbara County, California. Red ochre in graves and on grave goods is common on the Island, and both whole and broken ornaments and tools are found in burials (Rogers 1929: 287-9). The measurements of the fused shale blade are: length 19.7 cm.; maximum width 3.6 cm.; width at base 1.8 cm.; maximum thickness 0.45 cm.

A knife blade also showing evidence of hafting is made of mottled brown chert and is well flaked. The cutting edge has been considerably thinned down and the hafted base appears to be straight. The asphaltum residue on the base shows the imprint of the grain from the wooden handle which was once attached to it. The hafting material extends 3.1 cm., from the



Fig. 4—ARTIFACTS FROM SANTA CRUZ ISLAND.
Center, fused shale blade; top, left, hafted knife; right, inlaid serpentine
right, bone objects.
ornament; bottom, left, hafted point;

base. Other measurements are: length 8.2 cm.; maximum width 3.7 cm.; maximum thickness 0.7 cm. The chert is probably local material as a number of outcrops exist on the Island (Rogers 1929: 309).

The leaf-shaped, hafted projectile point is also made of chert. Special interest in this artifact lies in the fact that the hafting was not done at the broader, rounded end, normally considered the base, but at the pointed tip. Therefore, what in this case would be generally considered a projectile point if found without the hafting material, may in actuality have been a tool used for cutting. An alternate hypothesis may be that the tip

of the tool was dipped into asphaltum for some other purpose or even accidentally. However, Miss Pat Lyon of the University of California at Santa Barbara told me that she had found a leaf-shaped, chert "projectile point" with asphaltum on the pointed end at site SBa 485 in Santa Barbara County. Rogers (1929: 301) mentions that he found flint weapons of a high order of workmanship in association with a male skeleton in a cemetery on Santa Cruz Island during his investigations there. The tool shown in Fig. 4 measures 6.6 cm. in length; has a maximum width of 1.3 cm.; maximum thickness of 0.4 cm.; and the asphaltum extends 1.9 cm. from the hafted end.

It is not possible at present to establish the function of the polished and incised bone container or ornament. The material is probably sea mammal bone, and it is well polished all over, both inside and out. Traces of asphaltum are visible at the bottom. The base is flat. On the body wall one fairly deep incision circles the base while two shallower parallel lines are incised about the neck. The opening, cut at a 45° angle to the neck, is also smoothly finished and polished. Measurements are: length 5.5 cm.; maximum width 2.7 cm.; maximum thickness 1.6 cm.

The serpentine ornament is cup-shaped and has two small holes drilled opposite each other near the rim. It is polished all over and decorated with eight well-spaced incisions running from top to bottom. These incisions are set with small disk-shaped *Olivella* beads, many of which have fallen from the asphaltum originally holding them in position. Seven similar beads are set in individually drilled depressions on each side of the holes near the rim, and ten similarly placed beads circle the base. A thin calcereous deposit along the walls can be seen inside the cup. Rogers (1929: 288) also mentions that he found many similar stone ornaments in burials but that such articles were lacking in early graves (ibid: 297). Measurements of the ornament are: length 11.1 cm.; diameter of opening 3.5 cm.; diameter of base 1.3 cm.

Most curious is the crudely polished bone point with asphaltum on its smooth stem. The point is well defined but not thin enough to be sharp. The most immediate thought is that it may possibly be part of an atlatl hook. The present length is 1.4 cm.; the pointed section is 0.7 cm. wide and 0.3 cm. thick.

All of the above artifacts can be ascribed to the latest or Canaliño phase in the prehistory of Santa Cruz Island. During this period the inhabitants of the Island were Chumash-speak-

ing people and several villages with Chumash place names have been recorded. It has been estimated that at its height Santa Cruz Island had a population of approximately ten thousand. (Kroeber 1925: 552-5).

The subsistence of the inhabitants of Santa Cruz Island during this period was mainly shellfish, especially abalone and mussel. Sea mammals such as seal, porpoise, and whale, a few land mammals such as deer and fox, and a great deal of fish made up the protein diet. The acorn was widely used as was the fruit and tender leaf of the *Opuntia* (a common cactus) growing profusely in or near village sites.

The Islanders made excellent, sea-worthy plank canoes and traded widely with the peoples of the mainland and other islands. For example, the fused shale came from the mainland and the serpentine probably came from Santa Catalina Island.

The Curatorial Staff of the Southwest Museum is always happy to examine material from private collections if the owners have data on the provenience of the artifacts. From this source are gleaned many valuable data such as have been presented above.

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AN ARCHEOLOGIST FROM JORDAN

In March the Museum was honored by a visit from Dr. Awni Khalil Dajani, Director of the Department of Antiquities of the Kingdom of Jordan. During the two days he spent with us his main interest lay in specimens showing the beginnings of civilization, but he was also impressed by our early Carbon-14 datings.